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ABSTRACT

The integrated service delivery system for Project Workability was evaluated to determine its effectiveness in meeting high school special education students' employment and training needs. Interviews were conducted with site managers and staff, students, teachers, field office staff, employers, and parents at six sites. Information on all 34 sites was also considered. The site programs were found to operate in conformity with the state model, although there were some differences in operations among sites. Activities included identification of students for project participation, assessment, employment preparation training, work experience, and supportive services. The State Department of Education's Office of Special Education was responsible for overall project management, and the Office of Employment and Training assisted the project staff. Operational problems included unfamiliarity with the Department of Rehabilitation's eligibility criteria, lack of resources, and lack of attention to funding expenditures. Conclusions were that the projects' integrated delivery system can increase the employability of high school special education students; the extensive coordination at the state and local level was a key factor in meeting objectives; and assessment and work experience contributed the most toward increasing students' employability. (A description of the project is attached.) (YLB)

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Project Workability Evaluation Report

November 1983

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Report Prepared By
The Employment Development Department
With Assistance From:

The State Department of Education
The Department of Rehabilitation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

"Project Workability" is a model project designed to increase the employability of high school special education students through an integrated service delivery system. The integrated system was to allow local educational agencies (LEAs) to coordinate their programs with the vocational services of the Employment Development Department (EDD) and Department of Rehabilitation (DR). This coordination was to result in a comprehensive program, including assessment, employment preparation training, work experience, and supportive services, which would increase the students' employability.

The project was initiated because the administration of the State Department of Education (SDE), Office of Special Education, felt that special education students were not being adequately prepared for employment. The EDD and DR administrations agreed to participate in this project because they shared SDE's concern for this target group. Before statewide implementation this year, the concept was tested in the Riverside/San Bernardino area in FY 1981/1982. This year, the project operated at 34 sites statewide.

For this year's program operation, SDE provided approximately $1,000,000 of Education of the Handicapped Children Act funding (Public Law 94-142). EDD agreed to provide employment services for all program sites. To accomplish this, 17 local EDD field offices had their budgets augmented by a total amount of $491,392 from EDD's Employment Services grant. Additionally, EDD provided $235,000 of Youth Employment and Development Act (YEDA) funding to 20 of the 34 sites for work experience allowances. DR agreed to facilitate early acceptance of and provision of services to students as DR clients. LEAs in the 34 sites functioned as site managers in addition to providing employment preparation training.

EVALUATION SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this evaluation was to determine if the model integrated service delivery system was effective in meeting special education students' employment and training needs. While making this determination, we isolated

those aspects of the model that were critical in increasing the students' employability so that the model could be replicated or improved.

The evaluation provides information on project planning, operations, management, and accomplishments. To determine the extent to which the integrated delivery system was implemented and its impact on the students, SDE, EDD, and DR staff conducted reviews at six sites. Interviews were conducted with site managers and staff, students, teachers, EDD and DR field office staff, employers, and parents. Additionally, information was obtained on all 34 sites from EDD's management information system (MIS) reports, local project reports prepared by site management, and surveys completed by DR local office staff.

This evaluation is based on immediate outcomes. A longitudinal study, which was beyond the scope of this evaluation, would be necessary to determine the long range impact of the model.

CONCLUSIONS

1. This project demonstrated that the model integrated service delivery system can increase the employability of high school special education students. (Page 13)

   Of the 1,121 students who had terminated from the project as of August 1983, 906 (81 percent) were positive terminations. Of these, 231 (21 percent) entered employment, and 675 (60 percent) continued their education or training.

   This project helped to better prepare special education students for employment by improving job behavior skills, job specific skills, job finding skills, ability to make career choices, and access to supportive services. Most persons interviewed stated that the students' employability had increased. They also noted gains in the students' self-confidence as a result of participation in the project.

2. <u>The extensive coordination at the State and local level was a key factor in the projects ability to meet its objectives.</u> (Page 14)

This project was a coordinated effort beginning with project design and continuing through operations and evaluation. Joint planning at the state and local levels was a critical factor in establishing and operating the coordinated model. This cooperative planning among the state agencies was necessary to establish policy and guidelines for local operators, commit resources, and resolve administrative problems. Also, joint planning at the local level was necessary to determine what agencies and organizations needed to be involved, establish contacts, learn about available services, define roles and responsibilities, ensure availability of resources, and resolve problems as they occurred.

The LEAs were able to provide more comprehensive services to students by using the community resources made available through the integrated delivery system. The coordination provided the benefit of established job services from EDD, and better access to services from DR. Also, DR accepted some assessments conducted by LEAs, which reduced duplication of effort and saved DR the cost of repeating assessments. Other community organizations provided job development for work experience and unsubsidized employment, supplemental resources, and support for the project.

3. <u>Assessment and work experience were the two program components which contributed the most toward increasing the students' employability.</u> (Page 15)

Thorough assessment was necessary to determine students' interests, abilities, and aptitudes. Results were used to counsel students and parents, recommend academic and vocational classes, and to match students with work experience jobs that were in the students' field of interest, when possible.

Work experience was the most critical activity in all sites evaluated. Students learned specific skills, first-hand knowledge of employer expectations and the rigors of the working world. They gained increased self-confidence from being able to perform "a job". The experience also gave students the opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities to employers. The importance of this activity is validated by SDE data which indicates that 75 percent of the students who entered unsubsidized employment were hired by their work experience employers.

LESSONS LEARNED

From the operation of this model project, we learned the following:

- Coordination enables education and service agencies to pool limited resources and provide more comprehensive vocational training for special education students. For these coordinated efforts to be successful, it is essential for all involved parties to understand each agency's purpose, services, staffing, and limitations. Joint planning, which results in clearly defined roles and responsibilities, helps foster understanding and a commitment toward positive outcomes.

- To successfully serve special education students it is essential to conduct thorough assessments, combine employment preparation training with work experience, and provide supportive services. For students with the greatest employability needs, it is more effective to start the process in the early high school years.

- Work experience gives students valuable experience in the world of work, increases self-confidence, and provides an opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities to employers. Providing subsidized wages and completing necessary paperwork are effective methods of gaining employer support for work experience. Monitoring of worksites to solve work-related problems is important in retaining employer involvement.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

"Project Workability" is a model project designed to increase the employability of high school special education students through an integrated service delivery system. The integrated system was to allow local educational agencies (LEAs) to coordinate their programs with the vocational services of the Employment Development Department (EDD) and Department of Rehabilitation (DR). This coordination was to result in a comprehensive program, including assessment, employment preparation training, work experience, and supportive services, which would increase the students' employability.

The project was initiated because the administration of the State Department of Education (SDE), Office of Special Education, felt that special education students were not being adequately prepared for employment. The EDD and DR administrations agreed to participate in this project because they shared SDE's concern for this target group. Before statewide implementation this year, the concept was tested in the Riverside/San Bernardino area in FY 1981/1982.

SDE provided approximately $1,000,000 of Education of the Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142) funding to LEAs in 34 geographic sites to improve high school special education programs. EDD agreed to provide job services at all sites. To accomplish this, 17 local EDD field offices had their budgets augmented by a total amount of $491,392 from EDD's Employment Services grant. Additionally EDD provided $235,000 of Youth Employment Development Act (YEDA) funding for work experience allowances at 20 sites. DR agreed to provide services to facilitate earlier acceptance of eligible students as DR clients. The project was operated at the local level by LEAs receiving PL 94-142 funding.

The project enrolled 2,051 special education students. Approximately 64 percent were learning disabled (see Attachment I for a listing of student disabilities). Most students had no prior work experience

and they needed to learn acceptable job behavior, job finding skills, job specific skills, and how to make realistic career choices. Many also needed supportive services.

B. Evaluation Scope and Methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine if the model integrated service delivery system was effective in meeting special education students' employment and training needs. While making this determination, we isolated those aspects of the model that were critical in increasing students' employability so that the model could be replicated or improved.

The evaluation provides information on project planning, operations, management, and accomplishments. To determine the extent to which the integrated delivery system was implemented and its impact on the students, SDE, EDD, and DR staff conducted reviews at six sites. Interviews were conducted with site managers and staff, students, teachers, EDD and DR field office staff, employers, and parents. Additionally, information was obtained on all 34 sites from EDD's management information system (MIS) reports, local project reports prepared by site management, and surveys completed by DR local office staff.

This evaluation is based on immediate outcomes. A longitudinal study, which was beyond the scope of this evaluation, would be necessary to determine the long range impact of the model.

II. FINDINGS

A. Planning

Joint planning at the state and local levels was critical to the development, administration, and operation of the local integrated service delivery systems. Cooperation was necessary to design a program that met the needs of the target group while working within the mandates, restrictions, and missions of the involved agencies.

The joint planning effort also enabled the planners to identify who should be involved, determine needed services, define roles and responsibilities and resolve problems. State level staff of SDE, EDD, and DR developed and distributed the Request for Proposal (RFP) to LEAs. The RFP outlined the project concept and required that site proposals be prepared by the LEAs in cooperation with EDD and DR local office managers. LEAs coordinated meetings with local EDD and DR managers and other involved parties to determine the extent to which the various agencies and organizations could participate in the service delivery system. State level SDE, EDD, and DR staff reviewed the proposals and selected the sites. The selected sites represented a wide-range of urban and rural areas with varying economic conditions (see Attachment II for a listing of sites).

When YEDA funding was requested for the 20 sites, a nonfinancial agreement was developed which documented SDE, EDD, DR, and LEAs roles and responsibilities. This agreement was a composite of site proposals. Since the agreement was a composite, roles and responsibilities varied from site to site.

Joint planning and problem solving at the state and local levels continued throughout the operation of the project. Data collected by the involved parties were shared, accomplishments were reviewed, and approaches were modified as needed. At most sites the joint planning effort was institutionalized by the establishment of advisory committees.

B. Operations

Identification of Students

Identification of the segment of special education students to be served by each site, which occurred during the planning process, was important because it dictated the emphasis site management placed on

the various project activities. When the students served were the least job ready, comprehensive services were needed for longer peiods of time.

Staff usually had to select participants whom they felt would benefit most from project activities because there were more students than could be served. While seniors were given priority for enrollment, SDE data indicates that approximately 56 percent were juniors or sophomores. Selection criteria included readiness to work, demonstrated ability, positive attitude, desire to work/participate, school attendance and grades. The extent to which the students possessed these attributes determined the programs' emphasis on employment preparation training, supportive services, and work experience.

Special education teachers and counselors identified, referred, and screened students. EDD and DR or other community representatives participated in some screening processes.

Assessment

The assessment process was critical in helping students make realistic career choices, recommending academic and vocational classes, and matching students with work experience slots.

Students were assessed through a variety of generally accepted test batteries. LEA staff tested students for vocational potential, vocational interests, aptitude, independent living skills, fine and gross motor skills, and scholastic aptitude. At some sites, DR or other involved agency staff provided or assisted in the assessment procedure. LEA staff had conferences with students, teachers, parents, and at some sites, DR staff, to develop individualized education and employability programs.

Employment Preparation Training

The emphasis on employment preparation training for special education students was important to help prepare them for future employment. Although the extent of training prior to the project varied among sites, this training was increased as a result of the project. Teachers we interviewed felt that the training was important to prepare students to be more self-sufficient after leaving school. This is especially true for those students who have been sheltered and need more intensive preparation.

The training included classroom instruction in job seeking skills, job behavior skills, and career exploration. EDD staff and/or other community representatives provided job search workshops, labor market information, and input on employer needs so curriculum could be modified to better meet those needs. At some sites, employment preparation training was provided by the schools in addition to regular classes. Over half of the students were enrolled in vocational education or Regional Occupation Program (ROP) classes to learn job specific skills. (See Attachment III for listing of classroom training content and Attachment IV for vocational training classes provided to students.)

Work Experience

Work experience was critical in providing students with job skills, first-hand knowledge of employer expectations, and the opportunity to demonstrate their employment potential. To make the work experience beneficial, it was necessary to match students with jobs, gain employer cooperation, and closely monitor worksites to resolve problems.

The MIS data shows that 1,007 of the 2,051 students enrolled participated in work experience. Students were selected by LEA staff based on the availability of work experience sites and the students' interest, capability, and desire to participate.

Work experience was provided by private and public sector employers in many areas, such as auto repair, health care, retail sales, child care, electronics assembly, food preparation, and service occupations. The employers trained the students to work in their businesses and expected them to be punctual and dependable. Many employers we interviewed stated that the students performed necessary work and that they were pleased with the quality and effort of the students. According to SDE information, 75 percent of those students who entered employment were hired by their work experience employers.

Employers helped to make the work experience a positive activity for students by giving them actual work to perform, showing interest in their progress, and making accommodations when necessary. When employers were aware of student's disabilities, they made accommodations such as allowing interpreters or project staff to accompany students to job sites. The most effective method of gaining employer involvement was to offer subsidized wages, pay workers' compensation, and complete project related paperwork.

YEDA funding was the primary source of work experience wages at 20 sites. Other sites used resources from PL 94-142 funding, CETA Prime Sponsors or DR. In addition, some students participated through their school work experience programs. Although employers we interviewed stated the wage subsidy was the most important incentive, many also became involved because of altruistic reasons.

To retain employer involvement and alleviate students' work related problems, LEA staff monitored worksites on a regular basis and discussed students' progress with supervisors and students. When problems existed, LEA staff counseled students, discussed problems with parents and, when necessary, transferred students from job sites.

Supportive Services

Students were provided supportive services which allowed them to participate and benefit from project activities. Services included transportation, counseling, assistive devices, and job development.

At both urban and rural sites, resolving transportation problems was necessary so students could participate in work experience and obtain DR required physical examinations. DR, LEA staff and, in some cases, parents provided transportation resources such as bus passes, tokens, school vehicles, or carpools. In addition, training for mobility and how to use public transportation was provided as needed.

Vocational and personal counseling was provided by LEAs, EDD, DR, or other involved parties. Vocational counseling helped students make career choices and acquainted them with requirements for various occupations. Personal counseling was provided, as needed, in areas such as how to get along with others and the importance of grooming.

Students who were referred and accepted as DR clients received assistance in the form of interpreters for the deaf, hearing aids, eye examinations and eyeglasses, clothing, equipment, and transportation.

Job development efforts were necessary to find work experience slots and to place students into unsubsidized employment. Job development was conducted by LEA, EDD, DR, or other agency staff. Potential jobs were developed by using EDD job listings, computerized job match information, and referrals by parents, students, Private Industry Councils, Chambers of Commerce, Rotary Clubs, other community organizations, and employer contacts. At some sites, EDD staff came on campus to register students and to provide other related services.

C. Management

The extensive coordination during the planning, implementation, and operation of the model helped to produce the desired outcome.

1. Project Management

SDE's Office of Special Education was responsible for overall project management. The project operator acted as an intermediary between the LEAs and State level EDD and DR staff to communicate accomplishments, relate problems, and assist in problem resolution. The project operator felt that communication was facilitated by having a central contact person in EDD and DR because so many offices at the state and local level were involved with the project.

The project operator fostered communication between all parties involved. Communication was essential to the project because agencies at both the state and local levels had to work together. An effective method of promoting communication was a series of statewide conferences attended by site managers and state level EDD and DR staff. Attendees shared information about site accomplishments, common problems, and methods of problem resolution. Site managers also had the opportunity to ask questions of the state level representatives, to clarify issues and receive training on how to fill out the various required forms.

2. Site Management

The on-site reviews showed that site management operated their programs essentially as planned. However, during this first year of operation, much time was spent establishing coordination, developing the program, and resolving problems. Site managers feel their basic programs are developed and they can now refine the programs, using established contacts and the lessons learned this year.

Site management's responsibilities included establishing and participating in advisory committees which included management from the involved agencies. The committees assisted in setting policy and providing direction. Site management also involved parents by providing orientation sessions describing project activities and holding individual conferences to discuss student assessment results. It was important for management to obtain the parent's approval so that students could participate in project activities.

3. Office of Employment and Training Management

In addition to providing YEDA funds, the Office of Employment and Training (OET) assisted the project in several ways. Although OET was responsible for only YEDA funded sites, individual participant data for both YEDA and non-YEDA sites were entered into their automated system so complete data would be available to project management. These reporting forms were streamlined to save time for LEA staff by deleting some non-mandatory information. In addition, OET agreed to input information from special forms which SDE needed for program evaluation. The forms contained additional information not available on regular CETA forms, such as the extent and types of disabilities.

OET authorized site management to provide students less than $3.35 per hour in work experience allowances. This change was requested by the SDE project operator. After reviewing the issue with EDD's Legal Section and the State Department of Industrial Relations, OET authorized flexible work experience allowances ranging from $2.55 to $3.35 an hour, depending on the student's level of ability.

OET also agreed to a three-month extension of YEDA funding for 14 of the 20 sites at the request of SDE. This allowed sites to expend their remaining allocations and for students to continue work experience.

4. Operational Problems

The involved agencies were able to work out many operational problems. For example, at several sites, LEA staff were unfamiliar with DR's eligibility criteria. As a result, they were referring students to DR who could not be accepted. DR's eligibility criteria, per federal mandates are:

- The disability must be a vocational handicap.
- There must be a reasonable expectation that the person can be helped vocationally.

To resolve this problem, DR and LEA staff worked out screening and referral procedures. LEA staff became familiar with DR eligibility criteria and were able to make more appropriate referrals.

Another problem that needed to be addressed by several sites was the lack of resources at some EDD and DR offices which prevented them from providing as many services to LEAs as anticipated. Although EDD and DR administration at the state level encouraged local office management to work with the LEAs, local offices had to add these project activities to their regular workload. Therefore, the extent of participation by these local offices had to be negotiated. Once the level of EDD and DR participation was determined, the LEAs turned to other community resources to fulfill unmet service needs. The negotiations with DR were important because the addition of project activities and clients to DR workload resulted in less time being available for other casework.

EDD administration allocated a portion of the Employment Services funding to support project activities. Nineteen EDD offices received funding specifically for Project Workability based upon management's assessment of local conditions and priorities.

At one large site several EDD offices were involved, with differing levels of participation. This led to "turf" issues and inconsistent services to the LEA. Site management addressed the problem by enlisting the help of advisory committee members who encouraged the EDD offices that were providing fewer services to make the project a higher priority.

Another problem was some site managers' lack of attention to the rate at which YEDA funds were being expended. This inattention resulted in YEDA funds being depleted before the end of the contract period and early termination of YEDA funding for these site operations. The nonfinancial agreement between SDE and EDD designated that the parties jointly monitor the project. Although fiscal responsibilities were not clearly specified, EDD's Fiscal Programs Division was monitoring project expenditures as part of their regular duties. The OET project monitor was also tracking the expenditures by sites. The OET project monitor and Fiscal Programs Division staff identified individual site overexpenditures. This led to a closer review of total project expenditures and the determination that the YEDA funding had to be terminated to keep expenditures within the allocation.

The SDE project operator was monitoring only PL 94-142 funds. The project operator felt that monitoring YEDA funds was the responsibility of site managers since the site managers knew their allocations.

D. Costs

Current cost data is not yet available from SDE. The project was allocated $921,272 of PL 94-142 funding, $235,000 of YEDA funding, and $15,000 for YEDA administration. This computes to a cost per enrolled student of $571. However, this figure does not reflect the cost of services by EDD, DR, and LEAs, nor the supplemental resources provided by LEAs, CETA Prime Sponsors, community-based organizations, and other agencies. These

costs were not captured because the agencies felt that they were too difficult to determine accurately. Inclusion of these costs, as well as the cost of coordination activities at the state level, would increase the overall project cost.

III. CONCLUSIONS

A. The site programs operated in conformity with the State model.

- An integrated service delivery system was established by the LEAs which included participation by EDD and DR.
- Only special education students were enrolled.
- Activities included identification of students for project participation, assessment, employment preparation training, work experience, and supportive services.

There were some differences in operations among sites. Site management was given discretion on how to combine PL 94-142 funds and local resources to meet the specific needs of students, LEAs, and the agencies involved. The extent of participation by EDD and DR offices varied as each agency committed resources based on availability and priorities.

The PL 94-142 funding was used primarily for additional staff to act as job developers, teachers' aides, work experience monitors, interpreters, and providers of employment preparation training. Funds were also used to purchase vocational testing materials, provide transportation, pay for work experience stipends, and at one site, to develop a computerized job match system. Other local entities such as CETA Prime Sponsors and community based organizations provided resources and services not available from LEAs, EDD, or DR.

B. The model better prepared special education students for employment by improving:

- Job behavior skills--through employment preparation classroom instruction, work experience, and work related counseling.

- Job specific skills--through vocational and ROP classes, work experience, and unsubsidized employment.

- Job finding skills--through employment preparation classroom training and job search workshops.

- Ability to make career choices--through assessment, career exploration, and vocational counseling.

- Access to supportive services--through referral and acceptance as DR clients and project support activities such as transportation and counseling.

Most persons we interviewed felt that the students' employability had increased. They noted gains in the students' self-confidence as a result of participation in the project. Employers noted an increase in students' job skills, dependability, and ability to work cooperatively with fellow employees. Teachers commented that work experience helped students to see the relationship between classroom instruction and a job. This increased awareness resulted in improved attendance and more interest in classroom instruction. Parents stated that their children seemed more mature and accepted responsibility better. Students stated they could now perform a job, make career choices, and felt better about themselves.

MIS data indicates that the project had an overall positive termination rate of 81 percent. A total of 1,121 students had terminated from the project as of August 1983. Of these, 231 (21 percent) entered employment, and 675 (60 percent) continued their education or training.

C. The LEAs were able to provide more comprehensive services to students by using the community resources made available through the integrated delivery system.

Each local agency contributed their expertise and resources to help the students. EDD offices provided job services. Although not all job services were provided at all sites, the services provided by local offices included job development for work experience and unsubsidized employment, job search workshops, labor market information, completion of paperwork for YEDA work experience, and Targeted Jobs Tax Credit vouchering.

Coordination with DR offices enabled LEA staff, parents, and students to learn more about DR services and eligibility criteria. LEA and DR staff worked out referral procedures. As of August 1983, DR reported that 815 students had been referred to DR. Of these, 366 have been accepted as clients, 379 were under consideration, and 70 were not accepted. Students who were accepted as clients received services such as transportation, tools, equipment, and assistive devices. Another benefit of the coordination effort was DR's acceptance of some assessments conducted by LEA, which reduced duplication of effort and saved DR the cost of conducting those assessments.

Coordination with other local entities such as CETA Prime Sponsors, community based organizations, Private Industry Councils, and Chambers of Commerce, resulted in job development for work experience and unsubsidized employment, supplemental resources, and support for the project.

D. Joint planning at the state and local levels was critical in establishing and operating the model. This cooperative planning among the State agencies was necessary to establish policy and guidelines for local operators, commit resources, and to solve administrative problems. Joint planning at the local level was necessary to determine what agencies and organizations needed to be involved,

establish contacts, learn about available services, define roles and responsibilities, ensure availablity of resources, and to resolve problems as they occurred.

E. Although all activities helped to increase students' employability, the two critical activities were assessment and work experience.

Thorough assessment was necessary to determine students' interests, abilities, and aptitudes. Results were used to counsel students and parents, recommend academic and vocational classes, and to match students with work experience jobs that were in the students' field of interest, when possible.

Work experience was the most critical activity in all the sites evaluated. Students gained specific skills, first hand knowledge of employer expectations and the rigors of the working world, and increased self-confidence from being able to perform "a job".

The work experience also gave students the opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities to employers. The importance of this activity is validated by SDE data which indicates that 75 percent of the students who entered unsubsidized employment were hired by their work experience employers.

Several factors influenced the success of the work experience component:

- Matching students to appropriate work experience jobs by using assessment results.

- Making work experience jobs accessible to students by considering work hours, developing jobs close to schools or homes, and by resolving transportation problems.

- Involving employers willing to make accommodations for students, when necessary. Employers often had to exercise patience, repeat instructions, and break jobs into smaller tasks.

- Gaining employer commitment by providing subsidies for work experience, completing necessary paperwork, and paying for workers' compensation. Employers we interviewed stated that the subsidies were their most important incentive. Site managers felt that the subsidized work experience was made even more attractive because EDD and LEA staff completed the necessary paperwork for employers.

IV. LESSONS LEARNED

From the operation of this model project, we learned the following:

- Coordination enables education and service agencies to pool limited resources and provide more comprehensive vocational training for special education students. For these coordinated efforts to be successful, it is essential for all involved parties to understand each agency's purpose, services, staffing, and limitations. Joint planning, which results in clearly defined roles and responsibilities, helps foster understanding and a commitment toward positive outcomes.

- To successfully serve special education students it is essential to conduct thorough assessments, combine employment preparation training with work experience, and provide required services. For students with the greatest employability needs, it is more effective to start the process in the early high school years.

- Work experience gives students valuable experience in the world of work, increases self-confidence, and provides an opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities to employers. Providing subsidized wages and completing necessary paperwork are effective methods of gaining employer support for work experience. Monitoring of worksites to solve work-related problems is important in retaining employer involvement.

Attachment I

DISABILITIES OF STUDENTS
WORKABILITY PROGRAM, MAY 1983

Disability	*Students	Percent
Deaf	82	4.0
Deaf-blind	0	0.0
Hard of hearing	48	2.0
Mentally retarded	308	14.0
Multihandicapped	69	3.0
Orthopedically impaired	51	3.0
Other health impaired	38	2.0
Seriously emotionally disturbed	89	4.0
Specific learning disability	1,381	64.0
Speech impaired	67	3.0
Visually handicapped	31	1.0
Total	2,164	100.0

Source: State Department of Education

*The number of students is a count of students with disabilities. It exceeds the number of students participating (1,907) because some students have multiple disabilities.

DEFINITIONS OF DISABILITIES

Deaf--A hearing impairment which is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, which adversely affects educational performance.

Deaf-blind--Concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational problems that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for deaf or blind children.

Hard of Hearing--A hearing impairment, whether permanent or fluctuating, which adversely affects a child's educational performance but which is not included under the definition of "deaf" in this section.

Mentally retarded--Significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, which adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Multihandicapped--Concomitant impairments (such as mentally retarded-blind, mentally retarded orthopedically impaired, etc.), the combination of which causes such severe educational problems that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blind children.

Orthopedically impaired--A severe orthopedic impairment which adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly (e.g., clubfoot, absence of some member, etc.), impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis, etc.), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns which cause contractures).

Other health impaired--(1) Having an autistic condition which is manifested by severe communication and other developmental and educational problems; (2) or having limited strengh, vitality or alterness, due to chronic or

acute health problems such as a heart condition, tuberculosis, rheumatic fever, nephritis, asthma, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, epilepsy, lead poisoning, leukemia, or diabetes, which adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Seriously emotionally disturbed--A condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree, which adversely affects educational performance:

(1) An inability to learn which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors;

(2) An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers;

(3) Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances;

(4) A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or

(5) A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

The term includes children who are schizophrenic. The term does not include children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they are seriously emotionally disturbed.

Specific learning disability--A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain injury, minimal brain disfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include children who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor handicaps, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

Speech impaired--A communication disorder such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment, which adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Visually handicapped--a visual impairment which, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partially seeing and blind children.

Source: Code of Federal Regulation, 34, Part 300.5.

Attachment II

LISTING OF PROJECT WORKABILITY SITES

Bellflower Unified School District
Berkeley/Alameda Unified School District
*Contra Costa County Office of Education
Culver City Unified School District
Fresno County Office of Education
*Garden Grove Unified School District
Grant Union Unified School District
*Huntington Beach Unified School District
*Irvine Unified School District
Jefferson Unified School District, Pacifica
*Lake Tahoe Unified School District
*Los Angeles Unified School District
*Marin County Office of Education
Merced County Office of Education
*Napa County Special Education Local Plan Area
*North Inland County Special Education Local Plan Area
*North Orange County Regional Occupation Program
*Oceanside Unified School District
*Pajaro Valley Unified School District
Richmond Unified School District
Riverside/San Bernardino Counties Office of Education
*San Jose Unified School District
*San Lorenzo Unified School District
*San Francisco Unified School District
*Santa Barbara County Office of Education
*Santa Clara County Office of Education
*Sutter County Schools Office
*Tri-Counties Consortium (Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne)
Trinity County Office of Education
Tulare County Department of Education
Vallejo County Special Education Local Plan Area
*Ventura County Special Education Local Plan Area
Whittier Unified School District

*Received YEDA funding for work experience allowances.

Source: State Department of Education

CLASSROOM TRAINING CONTENT PROVIDED STUDENTS
WORKABILITY PROGRAM, MAY 1983

Content	*Students	Percent
Employer expectations	1,583	16.0
Employment opportunities	1,336	14.0
Employment related concepts	1,627	17.0
Independent living skills	1,295	13.0
Job analysis	1,363	14.0
Job seeking skills	1,526	15.0
Obtaining employment	994	10.0
None reported	106	1.0
Total	9,830	100.0

Source: State Department of Education

*The number of students is a count of students provided classroom training. The "total" exceeds the number of students who took courses (1,907) because some students were provided more than one course.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING COURSES PROVIDED STUDENTS
WORKABILITY PROGRAM, MAY 1983

Type of Courses	* Number of Courses	Percent
Agriculture	92	5.2
Consumer and homemaking	67	3.7
Distributive education**	107	6.0
Health occupations	66	3.7
Home economic occupations	108	6.0
Industrial arts	462	25.9
Office occupations	139	7.8
Technical education	27	1.5
Trade and industrial	262	14.7
Work experience education	456	25.5
Total	1,786	100.0

Source: State Department of Education

*The number of courses is a count of courses students completed. The "total" exceeds the number of students who took courses (1093) because some students took more than one course.

**Distributive education includes courses in manufacturing, retailing, marketing, wholesaling and advertising.

PROJECT WORK ABILITY

Rationale

The Department of Education has implemented Project Work Ability to provide career and/or vocational education training and work experience in the private sector in order to increase secondary special education student's employability.

Work Ability is a project which is a response to both legislative, parental, and agency concerns that the cost of education should result in a more efficient taxpayer payback in terms of more employable skills for disabled youth. If disabled adults require rehabilitation services to find or continue employment, there must be a way to encourage schools, employers, parents and agencies to work together to improve the employment of disabled secondary-aged youth before they leave the K-12 education system.

National statistics on the poverty rate of disabled workers reached 26% in 1982, a rate more than twice that of other workers. According to a recent Census Bureau report, of the 13.1 million people nationally classified as having a work disability, 3.4 million were living in poverty. In contrast, the poverty rate for nondisabled people to employment was about 10 percent.

While coordination with outside agencies was needed, many LEAs also need increased internal coordination between special education and other school services available to the non-handicapped. Few severely handicapped students are successful in vocational education unless extra assistance is available, and, a few special educators have developed the vocational skills required to train students for employment as there is little emphasis upon these skills in preservice institutions.

Students often fail to succeed in required academic courses because they lack the academic readiness for these courses, or the vocational courses are not alway specfically designed at the reading or math levels required for some special education students.

A State interagency approach was needed to bring together the teaching skills of education, the job seeking and finding skills of the Employment Development Department specialists, and the couseling skills of the rehabilitation counselor.

Work Ability in 1982-83

Therefore, the State Departments of Education (SDE), Employment Development Department (EDD) and the Department of Rehabilitation (SDR) decided to pilot a coordinated work and training model through a state interagency agreement so that teachers, agency representatives, parents and employers could test the concept of work experience for disabled youth ready to leave high school in thirty-four areas of California. This model was designed in anticipation of the Job Training Partnership Act.

In 1982, thirty-four school site areas of the state applied and were funded to operate Project Work Ability. These sites applied for a PL 94-142 Education of the Handicapped Children Act, State Discretionary grant available from the Office of Special Education. The recruitment and selection of grant sites was jointly

shared by SDR, EDD and SDE staff. Local workshops were also given regionally by SDE, EDD and SDR staff to alert schools about these grants. Each school site projected the number of students it could actually place on a paid or unpaid private employer's site, and each grant application had to be signed by a local SDR and EDD administrator in order to be considered. In August 1982, 1,200 students were projected to receive work experience in private sector jobs.

Then, in September, 1982, EDD and SDE signed a non-financial interagency agreement whereby EDD contributed $235,000 from the State Youth Employment and Development Act (YEDA) for minimum wage benefits for approximately 350-400 students in 20 of the 34 chosen sites. The Department of Rehabilitation estimated that 1.3 million dollars in state and local in-kind resources would be provided to students and schools in the project. The Department of Education granted 1 million dollars in PL 94-142 funds for training, employment, transportation and ancillary costs for students.

Local interagency efforts began to place students in private sector jobs while students were in school receiving a coordinated training demanded by the job performed. Each project was also required to find local community support for their projects, such as Industry Education Councils, Rotary, Lion's Clubs, Chambers of Commerce, local Governor's Committees on Employment of the Handicapped, etc. This requirement was stated to develop local support for employing students and to make communities aware of students and their skills and strengths.

Many sites joined forces with CETA Prime Sponsors, Youth Employment Services and community-based organizations as subcontractors. The State encouraged local efforts through existing systems to meet local employer's needs despite a growing unemployment figure in California. And it also encouraged planning with parents and students to find jobs available in local communities, since many families of handicapped children often locate near educational institutions most capable of serving their students, particularly the severely handicapped.

Because of the positive changes in student employment statistics, school curriculum, teacher involvement, interagency relationships, Work Ability was funded again in 1983-84.

Work Ability in 1983-84

In 1983-84, Work Ability is funded with PL 94-142 State Discretionary funds and PL 94-482 Vocational Education Act Subpart 3 funds. There are no Youth Employment and Development Act funds available, as these funds were eliminated in the Governor's budget for 1983-84. In 1983-84, thirty-three projects are continuing to accept funds while exploring ways to continue their efforts locally next year.

The impact of this program is far-reaching. In 1982-83, of the 2,051 handicapped students who received services in the project, 1,200 students were on a work experience or on-the-job training in a private sector job. By August 1983, of the 628 students who had graduated or left school, 351 were employed in an unsubsidized job either with their work experience employer or another employer. Work Ability was reported as successful for other participants since continuing an education is also a success for this project.

According to Department of Rehabilitation, in August 1983, 815 students were referred for DR services, of which 366, were assisted and 379 were being evaluated. Many local EDD offices assisted in job search and placement for many projects and students, and provided training to local school personnel.

All sites plan to conduct a follow-up survey of their 1983 graduates in May 1984, to determine what impact Work Ability had upon them a year after leaving school. Also, University of California, Santa Barbara will conduct a comparison study between a control group of Work Ability graduates and other handicapped youths who did not receive work experience.

A new focus of the project in 1983-84, is to (1) integrate as many projects as possible with Service Delivery Areas (SDAs) Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) activities (2) to study the student stipend incentives offered in Work Ability for ways to institutionalize the process in other schools and (3) to study the interagency coordination and its possibilities for state policy or legislation.

It is anticipated that the impact of the experience gained by teachers, counselors and administrators will effect changes in many local education agencies, as inter-agency and intra-agency coordination may be the solution to dwindling resources for educators and parents. More importantly, handicapped youth who were once considered unemployable, are now independent from assistance.

Many of the projects have successfully incorporated Work Ability with Job Training Partnership Act activities as California has defined handicapped youth as "disadvantaged" youth, who are eligible for JTPA. Most sites have also reported that student stipends were a necessary incentive for locating employers and for encouraging students to participate in Work Ability.

Work Ability projects welcome your inquiries and visits. Please contact VOICE (916) 445-0404, 721 Capitol Mall, Sacramento, CA 95814 for a Program and/or Resource Person Description of each project. Also, you may contact Gail Zittel (916) 324-3643 in Youth Employment Linkages Service Unit, 721 Capitol Mall, Sacramento, CA 95814, for further information.

PROJECT WORK ABILITY

1. Bellflower Unified School District
   Milton Wilson
   (213) 866-9011 Ext. 31

2. Contra Costa County Supt. Schools
   Marian Cornfield
   (415) 944-3403

3. Culver City Unified School District
   Sheryl Pettitt
   (213) 390-2314

4. Elk Grove Unified School District
   Danielle Draper
   (916) 925-6098

5. Fresno County ROC/P
   Rebecca Jackson
   (209) 227-3952

6. Garden Grove Union High School Dist.
   Hank Hodgdon
   (714) 638-6308

7. Grant Jt. Union High School District
   Diana Bowington
   (916) 331 2394

8. Huntington Beach Union High SD
   Jeannette Johnson
   (714) 964-3339

9. Irvine Unified High School District
   Beverly Huff
   (714) 552-4211 Ext. 46

10. Jefferson Union High School District
    Judy Reagan
    (415) 355-4131

11. Lake Tahoe Unified School District
    Jackie Nelson
    (916) 541-2850

12. Los Angeles Unified School District
    Jim Konantz
    (213) 742-7562

13. Marin County Office of Education
    Arline Zerkel
    (415) 472-4110

14. Merced County Supt. of Schools
    Dr. Ellsworth R. Wolfe
    (209) 385-8436

15. Napa Valley Unified School District
    Tom Spencer
    (707) 252-5588

16. North Inland Special Ed. Region
    Doyle Knirk
    (619) 726-8720

17. North Orange County ROC/P
    Kay Turley
    (714) 776-2170

18. Oceanside Unified School District
    Jim Lindemenn
    (619) 757-2560

19. Pajaro Valley Unified SD
    Carol Fitzbuck
    (408) 728-6337

20. Richmond Unified School District
    Devi Jameson
    (415) 234-9364

21. San Francisco Unified SD
    Joanne Prieur
    (415) 648-1204

22. San Jose Unified School District
    Laetitia Carmack
    (408) 998-6326

23. San Lorenzo Unified School District
    William Mowery/Marlyn Lawrence
    (415) 276-3121 or (415) 895-3042

24. San Mateo County Office of Education
    Patricia Evans
    (415) 573-2109 / 2621

25. Santa Barbara County Office of Ed.
    Mary Scopatz
    (805) 964-4711 Ext. 400

26. Santa Clara County Office of Ed.
    Kathryn Thomas/Karen Jensen/
    Mark Murphy
    (408) 947-6549

27. Sutter County Schools Office
Bob Ginther
(916) 674-3469

28. Tri-County Consortium for Special Ed.
John Brophy
(209) 736-4662

29. Trinity County Office of Special Ed.
Donald R. Stewart, Asst. Supt.
(916) 623-2861

30. Tulare County Office of Education
Mary Jo DeSio
(209) 733-6737

31. Vallejo City Unified School District
Edward W. Brower
(707) 643-0341

32. Ventura County SESA Consortium
Milton Le Couteur
(805) 659-3682

33. Whittier Union High School District
Dan Hulbert
(213) 698-8121 Ext. 287